# Mentoring Language-New Teacher Center www.newteachercenter.org



How can I be a better educator tomorrow than I was today and lead others to do the same?

#### **Paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing communicates that the listener has...

Listened carefully,

Understood what was said,

Extends thinking, and

Cares

#### Paraphrasing involves:

- · Restating in your own words
- Summarizing
- Organizing

Possible paraphrasing stems include:

So,...

*In other words,...* 

It sounds like...

There are several key points you're bringing up...

From what you're saying,...

You're primarily concerned with...

#### Clarifying

Clarifying communicates that the listener has...

Heard what the speaker said,

but does not fully understand what was said

Clarifying involves asking a question (direct or implied) to:

- Gathermore information
- Discover the meaning of the language used
- Learn more about the speaker's reasoning
- Seek connections between ideas
- Develop or maintain a focus

Possible clarifying stems include:

Would you tell me a little more about ...?

Let me see if I understand...

Can you tell me more about...

It would help me understand if you'd give me an example of...

So, are you saying/suggesting...?

What do you mean by ...?

How are you feeling about ...?

#### Mediational Questions

Mediational questions help bring about a new understanding by posing questions that extend thinking, learning, and planning.

Mediational questions help the colleague:

- Hypothesize what might happen
- Analyze what worked or didn't
- Imagine possibilities
- Compare intended plans and outcomes with what actually happened

Possible mediational question stems include:

What's another way you might ...?

What would it look like if ...?

What do you think would happen if ...?

How was\_\_\_\_different from (like)...?

What sort of an impact do you think...?

What criteria do you use to ...?

When have you donesomething like\_\_\_before?

What do you think about ...?

How did you decide ...? (come to that conclusion?)

What might you see happening in your classroom if...?

What might have contributed to ...

What do you think\_\_\_might have been thinking or feeling?

## Non-Judgmental Responses

Non-judgmental responses communicate that the listeneris open-minded, encouraging, and interested.

Non-judgmental responses help to:

- Build trust
- Promote an internal locus of control
- Encourage self-assessment
- Develop beginning teacher autonomy
- Foster risk-taking

Possible non-judgmental responses include:

Identifying what worked and why

I noticed when you the students really

Encouraging

It sounds like you have a number of ideas to try out!

Asking the teacher to self-assess

In what ways did the lesson go as you expected? What didn't you expect?

Asking the teacher to identify her or his role What instructional decisions made the lesson successful?

Showing enthusiasm for and interest in the teacher's work and thinking

I'm interested in learning/hearing more about...
I'm really looking forward to...

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### Suggestions

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#### Suggestions...

- Are expressed with invitational, positive language and vocal tone
- Offer choices to encourage ownership
- Are often expressed as a question (or include a "tag question" to invite further thinking and elaboration)
- Are achievable—enough to encourage but not to overwhelm
- May provide information about the mentor's thinking and decision-making strategies
- That are accompanied by research and/or rationale are more likely to be either accepted or elaborated upon by the teacher

### Suggestion Stems

Express suggestions that represent using strategic practices, embed choices, and encourage thinking/experimentation:

- From our experience, one thing we've noticed...
- Several/some teachers I know have tried different things in this sort of situation, and maybe one might work foryou...
- What we know about is...
- Based on your question, something/some thing to keep in mind when dealing with...
- There are a number of approaches...

Following a **suggestion** with a question invites the teacher to imagine/hypothesize how the idea might work in his/her context:

- How might that look in your classroom?
- To what extent might that work in your situation/with your students?
- What do you imagine might happen if you were to try something like that with your class?
- Which of these ideas might work best in your classroom (with your students)?

#### **Teachable Moments**

# **Teachable moments** are spontaneous opportunities that offer the mentor an entry point to:

- Fill in instructional gaps
- Help the teacher make good choices
- Encourage the teacher to take "the next step"

Taking advantage of a teachable moment involves:

- Sharing in the spirit of support
- Being brief—focus on the essential
- Being strategic
- Avoiding using jargon or sounding pedantic

Possible teaching moment stems include:

One thing to keep in mind is...

If you're interested in\_\_\_\_\_, it's important to...

What I know about\_\_\_\_is...

It's sometimes/usually helpful to\_\_\_when...

### Attitudes for Effective Listening

Effective listening communicates that the listener is...

- Respectful
- · Focused on building the relationship
- Increasing his/her knowledge and understanding
- Encouraging
- Trustworthy

#### Effective listening involves:

- Truly hearing what the other person has to say
- Viewing the other person as separate from yourself with alternative ways of seeing what you see
- Genuinely being able to accept the other person's feelings, no matter how different they are from your own
- Trusting the other person's capacity to handle, work through, and find solutions to his/her own problems